



September 26, 2012

House Transportation Committee  
Capitol Building  
Lansing, MI

Re: Regional Transit Authority

Dear Committee Members,

A previous commitment prevented me from being at this hearing in person today but I am compelled to write to you regarding the establishment of a Regional Transit Authority in Michigan.

I have been a Real Estate Developer and Builder in Michigan for more than 40 years. During those years my company has developed a number of commercial and residential locations in the tri-county areas. We have also developed in other states including Ohio and North and South Carolina.

Safe, reliable and efficient public transportation is an economic engine for the region and proximity to public transportation enhances property values. Price, Waterhouse Coopers identified that locations near public transit are at the number one location for developments of all types. In addition, Data Driven Detroit states that 140,000 Detroiters commute every day to jobs outside of the city, and up to 40% of Detroiters do not own cars. Regional public transit expands the labor market for employers in the region to include all 4.2 million residents. Further, I have personally observed elsewhere in the United States the positive benefits of a transit system that stimulates investment, thereby creating major capital availability to facilitate redevelopment and new development. This of course, will generate more jobs and enhance quality of life.

Other points to consider:

1. People ride transit to either make money or spend money and the region needs more of both.
2. For many people in the region, public transit is the difference between a paycheck and no check at all.
3. Access to safe, reliable public transportation is a location priority for tech-savvy youth. Establishing good regional transit will help keep talented youth here in Michigan.

In closing I would ask how community leaders can be expected to plan and implement critical aspects of the future of our transit needs if we do not have a regional authority to accomplish this. The Detroit metropolitan area is the only major area in the nation, and perhaps the world, that lacks any form of rapid transit and great cities have great transit.

Sincerely,



Alan M. Kiriluk  
Chairman, KIRCO  
Chair, Oakland County Business Roundtable-Transportation